

McCollum Responds to Resignation of Secretary Shinseki

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Washington, DC – In response to the news that President Obama had accepted the resignation of Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric Shinseki, Congresswoman Betty McCollum (D-MN) released the following statement:

“The news of General Shinseki’s resignation this morning is an unfortunate political reality. General Shinseki has been a hero to this country through both his 38 years of military service reaching the rank of four-star general and in his role as cabinet secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

“General Shinseki and our nation’s veterans were betrayed by those in the Phoenix VA medical center who willfully misled about the nature of the problems affecting the VA health care system. He was not given the information he needed by those who reported to him in order to correct these problems. Moving forward, we must ensure that the next Secretary of Veterans Affairs does not meet similar institutional obstacles.

“Meeting the needs of our nation’s veterans must remain a top priority for both the Administration and for Congress. The broken system that has failed our veterans still remains in place. We must address the systemic problems plaguing the VA health care system and provide increased oversight and any other tools, including greater resources or additional clinicians, that will address the backlog of care for our veterans. It is my hope that all of my colleagues who sought the resignation of General Shinseki will pursue with equal vigor the reforms and resources needed to ensure all of our country’s veterans receive the timely care that they need.”

Congresswoman Betty McCollum serves on the House Appropriations Committee. She is Democratic Co-Chair of the Congressional Native American Caucus.